consumers in the States of Bihar, Gaja- rat and Maharashtra is given below:

(Fig. in '000 tonnes)

(Data Provisional)

States	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Bihar	17505	17638	19468
Gujarat	14655	15179	15320
Maharashtra	20838	23811	24092

The above data indicates steady growth of coal despatches to Gujarat, Maharashtra and Bihar. Available information also indicates that coal supplies to these States during the year 1992-93 were adequate. Coal Companies have however been asked to step up coal supplies to the consumers in order to meet their full requirements.

Prices of Essential Commodities

*18. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI IQBAL SINGH;

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the trend in the prices of essential commodities such as edible oils, sugar, spices, soaps and detergents including consumer manufactured goods during the last six months, month-wise, at retail level;

(b) what are the reasons for increase in the prices; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to check prices of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES CONSUMERS AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTONY);

(a) The details of the trend in the prices of essential commodities such as edible oils, sugar, spices, soaps and deter gents including consumer manufactured goods during the last six months, month-wise at retail level are given at Anne-xure. *(See* Appendix CLXVIII, Annexure No. 1)

(b) Some of the reasons for increase in the prices of essential commodities are increase in the cost of inputs, raw materia's, fertilizers, electricity, petroleum products, salary and wages of the workers increase in the cost of transpora-tion and gap in the supply and demand of certain commodities.

(c) The Government has been taking appropriate measures on regular basis for containing the prices of essential com modities through provision of finances and credit, liberalisation of imports, im proved infrastructure facilities, increased production, better distribution net work and strengthening of the Public Distribution System.

Role of business in consumer awardness

*19. SHRIMATT VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAM-
BHAJIRAO SH1NDE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state: